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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

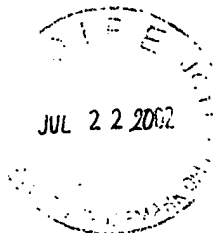
In re Application of:

Mary E. Gerristen et al.

Serial No. 09/784,810

Filing Date: 02/14/2001

For NOVEL SPHINGOSINE KINASES



Examiner: unknown

Group Art Unit No. 1614

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PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Prior to consideration of the merits of the above-identified application, Applicants respectfully request consideration of the following amendment.

Please delete the paragraph of lines 17-18 on page 6 and replace with:

Q1 **FIG. 5.** Alignment of SPkinasein HSDA59H18 (SEQ ID NO:6) and 80432911 (SEQ ID NO: 29).

Please delete the paragraph of lines 21-32 on page 18 and replace with:

Q2 The relatedness of amino acid families may also be determined based on side chain interactions. Substituted amino acids may be fully conserved "strong" residues or fully conserved "weak" residues. The "strong" group of conserved amino acid residues may be any one of the following groups: STA, NEQK (SEQ ID NO: 16), NHQK (SEQ ID NO: 17), NDEQ (SEQ ID NO: 18), QHRK (SEQ ID NO: 19), MILV (SEQ ID NO: 20), MILF (SEQ ID NO: 21), HY, FYW, wherein the single letter amino acid codes are grouped by those amino acids that may be substituted for each other. Likewise, the "weak" group of conserved residues may be any one